

Listing of claims:

1. (Original)A soft-sided carrying case comprising:
 - a primary compartment, the primary compartment including a plurality of sidewalls, a top wall and a bottom wall, a first one of the sidewalls and a second one of the sidewalls each formed of a flexible fabric material including an extended portion;
 - a first upper compartment, the first upper compartment having a plurality of sidewalls, a top wall, and a bottom wall, one of the sidewalls of the first upper compartment being formed of the same contiguous piece of flexible fabric material as the first sidewall of the primary compartment, the sidewall of the first upper compartment and the first sidewall of the primary compartment defining a first hinge line generally adjacent to an interface defined between the primary compartment and the first upper compartment, the first hinge line permitting the first upper compartment to pivot about the first hinge line between a folded position and an unfolded position; and
 - a second upper compartment, the second upper compartment having a plurality of sidewalls, a top wall, and a bottom wall, one of the sidewalls of the second upper compartment being formed of the same contiguous piece of flexible fabric material as the second sidewall of the primary compartment, the sidewall of the second upper compartment and the first sidewall of the primary compartment defining a second hinge line generally adjacent to an interface defined between the primary compartment and the second upper compartment, the second hinge line permitting the second upper compartment to pivot about the second hinge line between a folded position and an unfolded position; andthe carrying case including a pair of wheels and an extendable handle.
2. (Original)The soft-sided carrying case of claim 1, including a releasable closure engaging the first and second upper compartments for maintaining the first and second upper compartments in their respective closed positions.

3. (Original)The soft-sided carrying case of claim 2, wherein the closure includes at least one strap.

4. (Original)The soft-sided carrying case of claim 3, wherein the strap includes a releasable fastener.

5. (Original)The soft-sided carrying case of claim 1, wherein the primary compartment includes a closing flap.

6. (Original)The soft sided carrying case of claim 5, wherein the closing flap is secured in a closed position by a releasable fastener.

7. (Currently Amended) [[The soft sided carrying case of claim 1,]] A soft-sided carrying case comprising:

a primary compartment, the primary compartment including a plurality of sidewalls, a top wall and a bottom wall, a first one of the sidewalls and a second one of the sidewalls each formed of a flexible fabric material including an extended portion;

a first upper compartment, the first upper compartment having a plurality of sidewalls, a top wall, and a bottom wall, one of the sidewalls of the first upper compartment being formed of the same contiguous piece of flexible fabric material as the first sidewall of the primary compartment, the sidewall of the first upper compartment and the first sidewall of the primary compartment defining a first hinge line generally adjacent to an interface defined between the primary compartment and the first upper compartment, the first hinge line permitting the first upper compartment to pivot about the first hinge line between a folded position and an unfolded position;

a second upper compartment, the second upper compartment having a plurality of sidewalls, a top wall, and a bottom wall, one of the sidewalls of the second upper compartment being formed of the same contiguous piece of flexible fabric material as the second sidewall of the primary compartment, the sidewall of the second upper compartment and the first sidewall of the primary compartment defining a second hinge line generally adjacent to an interface defined between the primary compartment and the second upper compartment, the second hinge line permitting the second upper compartment to pivot about the second hinge line between a folded position and an unfolded position;

the carrying case including a pair of wheels and an extendable handle; and

wherein the primary compartment includes a top wall, and wherein each of the upper compartments includes a closing flap, at least a portion of the closing flap of each upper compartment being disposed in confronting relationship with the top wall of the primary compartment when the respective upper compartment is in the folded position, and further wherein the first and second hinge lines are adapted such that the closing flap of each upper compartment and the top wall of the primary compartment are disposed in a common plane when the respective upper compartments are in the unfolded position.

8. (Original)The soft sided carrying case of claim 7, wherein the closing flap of each of the upper compartments is secured in a closed position by a fastener.

9 (Original)The soft-sided carrying case of claim 7, wherein the closing flap of each of the upper compartments is defined at least in part by the bottom wall of the respective upper compartment.

10. (Currently amended)A soft sided carrying case comprising:

a fabric lower compartment, the lower compartment including a plurality of sidewalls, a top wall and a bottom wall;

a fabric first upper compartment, the first upper compartment having a plurality of sidewalls, a top wall, and a bottom wall;

a first hinge formed at least in part by flexible fabric and pivotally joining the first upper compartment to the lower compartment along a first hinge line, the first hinge permitting the first upper compartment to pivot about the first hinge line between a folded position and an unfolded position;

a fabric second upper compartment, the second upper compartment having a plurality of sidewalls, a top wall, and a bottom wall;

a second hinge formed at least in part by flexible fabric and pivotally joining the second upper compartment to the lower compartment along a second hinge line, the second hinge permitting the second upper compartment to pivot about the second hinge line between a folded position and an unfolded position;

a plurality of wheels; and

an extendable handle.

11. (Original)The soft-sided carrying case of claim 10, including a closure mechanism engaging the first and second upper compartments for maintaining the first and second upper compartments in their respective closed positions.

12. (Original)The soft-sided carrying case of claim 11, wherein the closure mechanism includes a releasable fastener.

13. (Original)The soft-sided carrying case of claim 10, wherein the lower compartment and the first and second upper compartments each include includes a closing flap.

14. (Original)The soft-sided carrying case of claim 13, wherein each of the closing flaps are secured in a closed position by a releasable fastener.

15. (Original)The soft-sided carrying case of claim 10, wherein a first sidewall of the lower compartment includes an extended portion that extends to form at least a portion of a first sidewall of the first upper compartment, and wherein a second sidewall of the lower compartment includes an extended portion that extends to form at least a portion of a first sidewall of the second upper compartment, and wherein the first hinge and the second hinge are defined exclusively by the extended portions of the first sidewall and the second sidewall, respectively.

16. (Withdrawn)A soft-sided carrying case comprising:

- a lower compartment, the lower compartment including a top wall, a bottom wall, and a surrounding sidewall;

- a first upper compartment, the first upper compartment having an upper wall, a lower wall, and a surrounding sidewall;

- a first fabric hinge pivotally joining the first upper compartment to the lower compartment along a first hinge line defined along an upper edge of the lower compartment;

- a second upper compartment, the second upper compartment having an upper wall, a lower wall, and a surrounding sidewall;

- a second fabric hinge pivotally joining the second upper compartment to the lower compartment along a second hinge line defined along an upper edge of the lower compartment;

- both of the upper compartments having a bottom wall in contact with the top wall of the lower compartment when the upper compartments are in their respective folded positions;

- at least one flexible reinforcement member applied adjacent to each of the first and second fabric hinges, each reinforcement member engaging the lower compartment and an adjacent one of the first and second upper compartments, the reinforcement member arranged to reinforce the hinges when the upper compartments are in their respective folded positions and when the upper compartments are in their respective unfolded positions;

- a plurality of wheels; and

- an extendable handle.

17. (Withdrawn)The soft-sided carrying case of claim 16, wherein the at least one reinforcement member comprises a sewn in place fabric strap.

18. (Withdrawn)The soft-sided carrying case of claim 16, wherein the at least one reinforcement member comprises a fabric strap secured by a fastener, and wherein the fastener includes an item selected from the group consisting of snaps, buttons, hook and loop closures, rivets, and zippers.

19. (Withdrawn)A soft-sided carrying case comprising:

- a lower compartment, the lower compartment including a top wall, a bottom wall, and an encircling sidewall;

- a first upper compartment, the first upper compartment having an upper wall, a lower wall, and an encircling sidewall;

- a first hinge pivotally joining the first upper compartment to the lower compartment along a first hinge line, the first hinge permitting the first upper compartment to pivot about the first hinge line between a folded position and an unfolded position;

- a second upper compartment, the second upper compartment having an upper wall, a lower wall, and an encircling sidewall;

- a second hinge pivotally joining the second upper compartment to the lower compartment along a second hinge line, the second hinge permitting the second upper compartment to pivot about the second hinge line between a folded position and an unfolded position; and

- each of the first and second hinges is defined exclusively by at least one sewn in place fabric strap, the fabric strap including a first edge engaging the lower compartment and a second edge engaging an adjacent one of the first or the second upper compartments, and further wherein the first edge of each strap is engaged by a lower overlapping fabric member secured to the lower compartment, and wherein the second edge of each strap is engaged by an upper overlapping fabric member secured to the upper compartment.

20. (Withdrawn)The soft-sided carrying case of claim 19, wherein the overlapping members are secured to the strap by bartack stitching.